

FACT SHEET



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Community Water Systems

Total Coliform Monitoring

Office of Water Quality

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Introduction:

Public Water Systems that supply drinking water must follow certain federal and state safe drinking water regulations. Drinking water is any water supplied for the purpose of human consumption or domestic use. The source of the water can be ground water from wells or surface water from rivers and lakes. Community Water Systems are a type of Public Water System. Community Water Systems are required to monitor for total coliform. The purpose of this fact sheet is to define and explain total coliform monitoring and reporting requirements for Community Water Systems.

Am I a Community Water System?	<i>"A Community Water System is any facility that has at least fifteen (15) service connections used by year-round residents and/or regularly serves at least twenty-five (25) year-round residents per year."</i>
How Does the Safe Drinking Water Act apply to me, as the owner or operator of a Community Water System?	<i>As a Community Water System, your facility is required to sample for coliform bacteria at least once per month based on total population served. Please reference the total coliform monitoring frequency table, below, to identify the minimum number of samples you are required to collect for analysis per month. Population is based on number of service connections times 2.5 occupants.</i>
Why is it important to sample for total coliform?	<i>Total coliforms are common bacteria in the environment and are generally not harmful themselves. The presence of these bacteria in drinking water indicates that other disease-causing organisms may be present. Monitoring for total coliform helps prevent contaminants that can cause disease and symptoms including diarrhea, cramps, nausea, and vomiting.</i>
How often will I need to take samples for total coliform?	<i>Systems serving fewer than 1,000 persons typically must sample at least once per month. Samples are required more frequently as populations increase. Systems should refer to the table below (TOTAL COLIFORM MONITORING FREQUENCY FOR COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS), which is also found in 327 IAC 8-2-8.</i>

TOTAL COLIFORM MONITORING FREQUENCY FOR COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS					
Population Served	Min. # of Samples Per Month	Population Served	Min. # of Samples Per Month	Population Served	Min. # of Samples Per Month
25 to 1,0001	1	12,901 to 17,200	15	96,001 to 130,000	100
1,001 to 2,500	2	17,201 to 21,500	20	130,001 to 220,000	120
2,501 to 3,300	3	21,501 to 25,000	25	220,001 to 320,000	150
3,301 to 4,100	4	25,001 to 33,000	30	320,001 to 450,000	180
4,101 to 4,900	5	33,001 to 41,000	40	450,001 to 600,000	210
4,901 to 5,800	6	41,001 to 50,000	50	600,001 to 780,000	240
5,801 to 6,700	7	50,001 to 59,000	60	780,001 to 970,000	270
6,701 to 7,600	8	59,001 to 70,000	70	970,001 to 1,230,000	300
7,601 to 8,500	9	70,001 to 83,000	80	1,230,001 to 1,520,000	330
8,501 to 12,900	10	83,001 to 96,000	90		

What will I need to do if I have a positive sample for total coliform?

If your system's routine test is unsatisfactory (test shows presence of coliform), you will be required to collect, and have analyzed, a set of 3 repeat samples (if more than 1 required distribution sample is taken per month) or 4 repeat samples (if only 1 required distribution sample is taken per month) and 1 ground water source sample from each ground water source in use at the time the total-coliform positive sample was collected.

At least 1 of the repeat samples must be collected from the same sample tap as the original unsatisfactory sample, 1 collected within five service connections upstream and 1 within five service connections downstream. If a 4th repeat sample is required, then it may be collected anywhere in the distribution system.

All repeat samples and source samples must be collected on the same day. If any repeat sample is total coliform positive, it means your system has exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) and you must distribute public notification within the area served.

All public water systems are required to collect 5 distribution samples the month after any unsatisfactory total coliform sample (Example: if you collect a routine sample on July 10 and it is total coliform positive, you will collect 3 or 4 repeat samples and source samples as soon as you are notified of the positive sample, and you will also collect 5 routine samples in August.)

IDEM's Role:

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) is responsible for protecting human health and the environment while providing for safe industrial, agricultural, commercial and governmental operations vital to a prosperous economy.

Public Water System's Role:

Community Water Systems must understand and comply with regulations for monitoring, treating and reporting. Community Water System owners and operators may contact IDEM's Drinking Water Branch at (317) 234-7430 to request free compliance and technical assistance.

Rule Citations: 327 IAC 8-2-4, 327 IAC 8-2-4.1, 327 IAC 8-2-7, 327 IAC 8-2-8, and 327 IAC 8-2-8.1 and 327 IAC 8-2.3-4.

Citizen's Role:

Citizens can contact their Community Water Supply for information on drinking water quality, find data on IDEM's Drinking Water Watch website at <https://myweb.in.gov/IDEM/DWW/>, and learn about source water protection at <http://www.in.gov/idem/4142.htm>.

Additional Information:

- For more information on the Total Coliform Rule Requirements, please visit the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA's) website at <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/tcr/regulation.cfm>. For Indiana's rules on Drinking Water Standards (327 IAC 8), including the rule on Consumer Confidence Reports (327 IAC 8-2.1), visit <http://www.in.gov/legislative/iac/t03270/a00080.pdf>.
- In addition to IDEM's Office of Water Quality Drinking Water Branch at (317) 234-7430, U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline, at 1-800-426-4791, offers assistance to Community Water System owners and operators and the public. Compliance information for Indiana Public Water Systems is provided on IDEM's Drinking Water Compliance Evaluation Web page at <http://in.gov/idem/cleanwater/2386.htm>.

This fact sheet is intended solely as guidance and does not have the effect of law or represent formal Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) decisions or final actions. This fact sheet shall be used in conjunction with applicable rules and statutes. It does not replace applicable rules and statutes, and if it conflicts with these rules and statutes, the rules and statutes shall control.